

MINOR MENTION.

BEN BUTLER is hard up for ready cash.

DAVID DUDLEY FIELD will write a book.

It is said that **Mr. Cleveland** has to shake 3,000 hands a week.

The conductors on street cars in Mexico always carry revolvers.

The pulp of the Florida banana produces excellent paper and rope.

The pulse of Napoleon I. beat forty-five instead of sixty times a minute.

A DOLLAR, worth \$600, according to a recently issued catalogue, is the silver dollar of 1804.

MR. THOMAS HUGHES, better known as "Tom Brown," has agreed to write a life of Peter Cooper.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S fortune is over \$80,000,000. There is an interesting widow for some titled personage.

MR. GLADSTONE'S principal objection to American axes is that their handles are not cut off at right angles.

On his fiftieth birthday the municipality of Vienna declared John Strauss free from all local rates for the rest of his life.

An English firm has begun the manufacture of casks and barrels of steel. They are lighter than wood and more durable.

MRS. LUCRETIA GARFIELD, widow of the murdered president, is the owner of a valuable gold mine situated near Raleigh, N. C.

The queen of Holland walks daily on the public streets. She dresses in somber garments and is accompanied by only one attendant, a lady.

The late Countess Loredano-Morosini-Gattensburg was the last descendant of the famous Doge Morosini who achieved the conquest of Morea.

The attempt to furnish penny dinners in London has been a failure. They were good in quality and quantity but the people would not patronize them.

The New York *Sun* thinks that the opium habit is increasing rapidly in that city, and that there will soon be need of a moral and spiritual battle against it.

SENATOR FAIR, of Nevada, is assessed for \$4,220,000 in the city of San Francisco, and is now a defendant in a delinquent tax suit in which the city claims from him \$93,262.

A BEEKEEPER of Riverside, Cal., has thirty-three hives of bees, which have yielded during the last season seven and a quarter tons of honey, an average of 414 pounds to the hive.

Not a mile of railroad, not a bank, not a telegraph office is erected in Calhoun county, Ill., though it has a population of about eight thousand. The typical resident is said to be part hunter and part farmer, with a decided leaning to leisure.

PRINCE ROLAND BONAPARTE has a novel idea. He purposes to have a collection of the different uncivilized races in Paris. We constantly, he argues, bring together the various products of the globe; why not bring together the producers?

The cholera has scared away so many visitors from Naples that it is said a number of artists, sculptors and bronze workers are on the brink of starvation, through a failure to obtain orders. A committee of English and American residents has been formed to solicit orders for them.

THE OUTSIDE DOG.

You may sing of your dog, your bottom dog,
Or of any dog that you please;
I go for the dog, the nice old dog,
That nicely takes his ease,
And wagging his tail outside the ring,
Keeping always his bone in sight,
Cares not a pin in his sound old head
For either dog in the fight.

Not his is the bone they are fighting for
And why should my dog sail in
With nothing to gain but a certain chance
To loose his own precious skin?
There may be a few, perhaps, who fail
To see it quite in this light;
But when the fur flies I had rather be
The outside dog in the fight.

I know there are dogs, injudicious dogs
That think it quite the thing
To take the part of one of the dogs,
And go yelping into the ring.
But I care not a pin what all may say
In regard to the wrong or the right,
My money goes, as well as my song
For the dog that keeps out of the fight.

—Philadelphia Call.

AILEEN'S NEW YEAR.

"It don't matter so much now, grandma," said Aileen, drying the tears that had sparkled on her cheeks like dew drops on a rose. "Of course it is very silly for me to cry, but I couldn't help it, just at first."

"But what is the matter, my pet?" said old Mrs. Harrington, soothingly. She had found Aileen coiled up in the deep embrasure of the window, where the winter sunset was strained through in deep hues of crimson and amber, crying bitterly.

The Harrington family were ambitious people. They had come to Virginia and purchased, at a merely nominal price, the fine old mansion that once belonged to a luxurious planter, long since dead, and on the same principle with the old gentleman in the "Pirates of Penzance," who bought a line of ancestors with his castle, had adopted all the airs and graces of the F. F. V.

Mr. Harrington, who had been contented to raise humble corn and pumpkins in the valley of the Connecticut River, now devoted himself to the more aristocratic crop of tobacco.

Mrs. Harrington, who had been a notable Yankee housekeeper, hired two negro women to do the housework and cultivated society; and the three Misses Harrington forgot the days of factory work and honest district school teaching in the gentilities of "Valley Lawn."

The old lady alone remained true to her colors.

"All this is very fine," said she, "but I don't see what is to be gained by it. Dan'll be losin' money, as true as you're born!"

"Money isn't everything, grandma," said her daughter-in-law, tartly.

"Humph!" said the old lady.

And when Aileen, the orphan cousin, came down from the New England hills, grandma was the only one who really welcomed her.

"There are three of us already," said Selina Harrington, grudgingly.

"Why couldn't she have been a boy, so as to help pa with the plantation?" said Norma.

"What do we want of any more girls, sighed Jaunita, whose baptismal name had been "Judith."

"Ain't no use growlin' about it," said "Pa," who could not be made an elegant gentleman, let the family varnish and veneer as they pleased. "Here she is, and here she's got to stay. I don't want her no more'n you do; but she ain't got no friends to go to, so what ye goin' to do about it?"

Aileen was pretty, too, in her shy, wild-daisy way, with big blue-black eyes, reddish-brown hair and a rich Titianesque complexion. The Misses Harrington were not pretty. This was another objection, although it was not generally discussed, and Aileen soon knew, by instinct, that the old grandmother was her only friend in all the big, dreary house.

A third matter of offense cropped out on All Hallow E'en, when Aileen went out into the woods to gather hickory-nuts to burn in the fireside blaze.

Perhaps it was not her fault that Mr. Daller's vicious bull jumped through the tumble-down fence and frightened her nearly out of her wits; and she was doubtless not personally responsible for the fact that Captain Dulany chanced to be passing, and rescued her from the big-horned enemy with prompt gallantry.

"He was so very kind!" said Aileen,

wistfully. "Do you think, grandma, that I thought to tell my aunt and girls that he walks with me when I go to the post office? or that he gave me them beautiful, deep-blue asters that they thought I found in the copse? or that it was he discovered the big bunch of mistletoe in Greenough's woods?"

"Well, not unless they ask you," said old Mrs. Harrington, shrugging her shoulders.

For she had heard three granddaughters discussing the Dulany question with some acrimony.

"I'm the eldest," Selina had said, tartly, "and I ought to have the first chance. If any of us is to call with ma at Dulany Beeches, it shall be me!"

"You always were a selfish thing!" said Norma. "Captain Dulany's mother has a large library, and you knew very well that I'm literary."

"I'm the youngest, and I don't see why I should be poked into a corner always," pouted Miss Juanita—Judith.

But Selina, by strength of years and tongue had carried her point.

So when New Year's Day approached, and Aileen timidly consulted Aunt Harrington as to what she should wear, that matron opened her large, light eyes with well counterfeited amazement.

"You, child!" said she. "Why, you're not to come at all! The girls don't want a whole drove in the parlor. Three women are quite enough. And you're so young, you know."

"I'm seventeen, aunt," faltered Aileen.

"Two or three years hence will do very well for you," said the relentless elder. "Try and put such silly nonsense out of your head."

And this was why Aileen was crying.

Old Mrs. Harrington understood it all very well. She had been young once. She saw the folly of interference in this particular case however.

"Dan'll's wife likes her own way," said she. "She ain't pleasant if she thinks any one is meddlin'. I'll tell you what, Aileen—you and I'll go out to the big chamber over the stun barn, and get Pomp to build us up a real good fire of pine logs in the old chimney. There's a carpet-loom there, and a spinnin'-wheel and all the fixin's, and I'll show you how I used to spin flax when I was a gal, and weave rag-carpet."

"Will you?" said Aileen, with brightening eyes. "Oh grandma, how very, very nice that will be! And can I roast chestnuts and apples in the ashes?—and will you tell me about your sailor-lover that was drowned before you ever saw my Grandfather Harrington?"

"Yes," said the old lady—"yes! We'll hev our New Year's by ourselves—me and you, child."

So Aileen put away the pretty, little, blue merino gown that she had retrimmed for New Year's Day, and donned instead the brown Merrimac calico that made her look like a robin-rebreast; and just about the time that her three cousins were quarreling for the possession of the biggest dressing-glass to "do" their hair, she and her grandmother were adjusting the ancient spinning-wheel in the stone-barn chamber, and piling wood in the cavernous recess of the huge fireplace.

They had a very pleasant New Year's day, after all, though the tears came to Aileen's blue eyes once or twice, when the carriages rolled by over the hard-frozen road toward the house.

And at dusk she lighted the cheerful candles, and sat down to prepare grandma's supper, with fresh corn-cakes, baked in hot embers, according to the recipe of Aunt Felicia, the colored cook, fragrant coffee, and sweet apples, roasted, and eaten with cream.

But Captain Dulany, riding his Morgan horse, Hotspur, through the pine woods, drew rein close by the old stone barn, whence he had not seen the red lights gleaming for ten years.

"What can it be?" he asked himself. "We children used to play at ghosts up there of an autumn evening, when the Valdimir family lived there. Or perhaps the careless servants have set something on fire."

He jumped off his horse, flung the reins over a projecting pine bough, and went in to see what the meaning

of this unwonted illumination might be.

The door stood wide open—the whole room was aglow with a warm, ruddy light. Grandma, enthroned in a big splint chair before the blaze, was drinking her coffee, and Aileen sat spinning at the old wheel, with cheeks softly reddened and blue eyes sparkling—a very picture of health and beauty.

Both started at the sudden apparition of the captain on the threshold.

"I—I beg your pardon!" said Capt. Dulany, lifting his hat. "I saw the light shining out, and I was afraid that something had happened."

"Something has happened," said Aileen, laughing. "I have learned to spin. And grandma and I are having a picnic. Will you come in, Captain Dulany?"

"Well, since your coffee smells so good, I think I will," said the gallant young officer.

His cup—which for lack of more expensive china happened to be a mug—was scarcely poured out, before their numbers were augmented by Mr. Ferrars and young Dr. Frenchurd, who had seen the lights, and had also observed "Hotspur" fastened to the fence.

"May we venture to intrude?" said they, peeping in over the stair-rail.

"Oh, certainly!" said grandma, smiling.

And Aileen distributed handleless cups and bountiful slices of golden-brown corn cake, yet steaming from the fire, to her guests.

"We are hardly prepared to entertain so large a company," said she, composedly; but we can, at all events, give you a sincere welcome."

Two—three—half a dozen more dropped in. Old Pomp was summoned to pour fresh pine cones on the blaze and bring more coffee and corncake.

He grinned from ear to ear.

"Pow'fu' like de good ole times," said he to Aunt Felicia, when he returned to his cabin. "De bery cream ob de gentry enjoyin' de cornpones an' coffee like dey was our own old marse's folks. Ain't nuffin like cornpone for rale good flavor, dat dey ait't. An' de young lady from de norf, she's as pretty as a peach. Reckon de captain finks so, too. He, he, he!"

And old Pomp shook his lean sides with an inaudible chuckle of glee.

Later in the evening the gentleman went up to the house, where stood the three Misses Harrington in a simpering row.

But their call there was like water after wine, and several of them returned to the "Stone Barn" to finish their evening.

Adrian Dulany remained the latest of all—so late, in fact, that it was he who escorted grandma—who had discreetly fallen asleep in her big chair some time ago—and Aileen to the house, under whispering pine boughs, by the light of a big, round moon.

The three cousins, whose list of calls had long since ended, were yawning in the parlor beside the great seed cake and the decanters of wine.

"Dear me!" cried Selina, as the little group came in. "Where have you been all day, Aileen?"

"In the old stone barn chamber, learning to spin," said Aileen, laughing and coloring.

Juanita looked sharply at her. What change had subtly crept over her voice and manner? Then she looked at Captain Adrian's bright face.

"Take good care of her," said the young officer, tenderly removing the heavy shawl from Aileen's shoulders. "She has promised to be my wife before a great many weeks."

It was not until Dulany had gone that the full cannonade of questions burst on Aileen's devoted head.

"Girls, girls! don't all speak at once," said the grandma. It's just exactly as I've always told you. The right one will be sure to come along if you sit in the chimney corner and wait. And that was just what Aileen was doing this evening.

And that night, when the frost white stars of midnight climbed the sky, Aileen whispered:

"Good-by, sweet New Year's Day—the happiest I have ever known!"—*Helen Forrest Graves.*

A feature of the Paris exposition in 1889 will be an iron tower, one thousand feet high. Given an abundance of money and a French engineer, there seems to be nothing impossible.—*The Current.*